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Colin Campbell
Excerpt
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Chapter 1 *Light and darkness*

The man and the woman danced around the office holding each other. They smiled and laughed as they danced. They had their arms around each other. They danced and they danced. They did not want this moment to go away.

‘We did it, John. We really did it.’

‘I know we did, Jenny. I know.’

John was a television producer and Jenny was his assistant. They were getting excited about a series of six television programmes they had made. The series was called *Know your Mind, Love your Body*. It was about the relationship between the body and the mind. Each programme had looked at a different subject: other forms of medicine, meditation, yoga, a good diet and so on. It had not been an expensive series to make, but millions of people had watched it and the newspapers had talked a lot about it.

It had been John’s idea. He felt there was a growing interest in the subject, but even he had been surprised by the size of the audiences and the interest in the newspapers.

‘Tell me again what the boss said, John.’

‘He said he thinks it’s the best series he’s seen since . . . ever. And he talked about how much the newspapers loved the programmes. Our managing director is a very, very happy man. He wants to talk to me about money, about my salary, about giving me a rise, would you believe?’

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The smile disappeared from Jenny's face for a second when he talked about his salary.

'And a rise for you too, of course!' John added. Jenny's smile returned. 'He thinks it might win the Montreux Gold Prize for best documentary programme.'

'It's fantastic,' said Jenny. 'We did it. It's a success. We really did it.' Jenny was dancing by herself now.

'Of course it's successful,' John joked. 'We believed it would be successful, and it is successful. If you believe in something, it will happen. It may not happen exactly the way you want, but it will happen. If we believe that something is true, it becomes true. That's what the programmes were all about.'

'Have you talked to Rachel yet?' Jenny asked, bringing him back to the present.

'I haven't had a chance to phone Rachel yet. I've just got off the phone with the managing director, I haven't had a chance. I'll do it now. But listen, let's talk over lunch, I have an idea for another programme.'

Rachel was John's wife. She was the first person he always ran to talk to when he had good news, or bad news, or no news, or when he felt low, or when he felt good. They had been married for just under two years and in that time they had kept no secrets from each other. They had told each other everything. It was why their relationship was so good, so strong. They discussed how they felt, what they were thinking, what they had done. Everything. They had no secrets from each other.

He picked up the phone and turned his back on Jenny before she had even moved towards the door, but she didn't mind. Jenny knew him, she knew his love for his wife and

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son, she knew how excited he was. She left the room smiling to herself. All days should be like this, she thought. But no, then they wouldn't be special, and this was a special day.

John sat down at his desk with the phone in his hand. He looked happily around his office and out of the window. The views from his fourth-floor office were some of the best in London: The Houses of Parliament were to the west, Tower Bridge was so close you could imagine reaching out and touching it and the whole building overlooked the River Thames. The river was busy today; there were boats carrying tourists, and office workers having a birthday party on a hired pleasure boat. Even the river police looked relaxed today as they went up and down the river doing work that was often unpleasant.

John almost never took time to look out of the window. He sometimes asked himself why the television company had spent so much money on a building in this beautiful but expensive part of London. Everyone who worked in the building was either out making films or so busy in meetings that they never looked out to enjoy the view.

Probably the building with its views was for the visitors from other British and foreign television companies who came to buy their programmes. It was big, big money, and the least you could do for these important men and women was offer them such a view. Maybe it helped sell the programmes, especially on a beautiful spring morning like this.

At this moment, John felt very good about himself as he looked at his office, as he thought about the success of his programmes. But then he remembered the phone in his

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hand and that he wanted to talk to Rachel. He paused and put the phone down again.

John was worried about Rachel. She had not seemed happy for the last couple of weeks. She had seemed nervous, worried about something. Worried most of all about Patrick, their young son. She had not wanted to go out anywhere recently. He had gone out alone at least three times in the last two weeks. To a party, to a play, to dinner with friends. The kind of thing that Rachel loved. But she had not wanted to go out of the house. She had not wanted to leave Patrick.

Twice she had woken up screaming in the middle of the night after bad dreams and had jumped out of bed and run to Patrick's room. She had picked him up and held him tight in her arms. She had pushed her face against him, crying and shaking as she held him until slowly her crying stopped and she put him down gently in his bed. She had not returned to their bedroom and John had got up and gone to her and led her back to bed.

'What was it?' he asked as he put his arms around her and held her. 'What was it, my love, what happened?' he repeated.

'I don't know, I don't know. I just knew that something bad had happened to Patrick. I don't know what. I was looking for him, I couldn't find him anywhere. I don't know, I don't know, I don't know what it was. I was just so frightened.'

He held her again as she started to cry once more and held her like that until she fell asleep. At first she moved and even shook in his arms and then she fell into a more gentle sleep, her breath soft on his cheek.

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When she had woken she had not wanted to talk about the dream, had not wanted to remember and so they had let it go. But later that same day she had run from their car with Patrick in her arms as John had started the engine. Since then she had refused to go anywhere in the car. Since then, if she had to go anywhere, she went on foot, carrying Patrick in her arms. She stopped every time a car came past, her lips pressed together in a tight line, her hands held around Patrick as if to protect him, as if she was afraid something was going to happen to him.

It was strange, John thought, to feel so successful and so worried at the same time. He picked up the phone again to call Rachel, his earlier excitement now gone, and he wondered what it was his wife was trying to protect Patrick from.